

GAME MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES



SEASON 2025

discipline. respect. integrity. passion. teamwork..

THE 5 KEY AREAS

Rugby AU has defined 5 KEY AREAS of the game. These areas have the greatest impact on the quality of experience for all participants. Within these areas, we highlight changes to Law or areas of focus for the 2024 Community Rugby Season.

Each aspect is summarized below and detailed within the document.

1.SAFETY

TACKLE HEIGHT GLOBAL LAW TRIAL
HEAD CONTACT PROCESS
CROC ROLL

2.SPEED

SPEED OF BREAKDOWN
JACKLER POSITIVE ACTION
“USE IT” CALL

3.SPACE

TACKLE & BREAKDOWN OFFSIDE
KICK IN GENERAL PLAY - PLAYERS MUST
RETREAT

4.SET-PIECE

SCRUM SET UP
POST CONTEST MANAGEMENT
DEFENSIVE #9 OFFSIDE LAW
LINEOUT SET UP
CONTEST IN AIR
MAUL FORMATION

5.INTERACTIONS

COACH/REFEREE RELATIONSHIP
CAPTAIN/REFEREE RELATIONSHIP
FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITY

OTHER

RUGBY AUSTRALIA
3 STRIKES POLICY

The implementation of the GMG and the game Focus Areas is the responsibility of all participants. A collaborative approach and willingness to engage in proactive discussions will allow a greater understanding of the different roles and practical implementation. This will drive a more enjoyable environment.

1.SAFETY

TACKLE HEIGHT

TACKLE HEIGHT GLOBAL LAW TRIAL

New law - 9.13

“A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerous. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the sternum even if the tackle starts below the line of the sternum.”

The primary aim of the Tackle Height GLT is to decrease the instances of direct head-to-head collisions and concussions.

Coaches should ensure that proper techniques are taught in both controlled and game-like training environments. Referees should enforce the laws based on the principle that violations must be “clear and obvious”; otherwise, they should “Play ON” and allow play to continue.

CROC ROLL

DEFINITION OF CROC ROLL:

Croc roll: A prohibited action where a player laterally rolls/twists or pulls a player on their feet in the tackle area to the ground. The action often lands on the player’s lower limbs,

PLAY ON - The arriving player pulls the jackler backwards or immediately to the side

FOUL PLAY - cleaner pulls or rolls jackler past the point of initial contact forward (risk of dropping on limbs or hyper extension). The level of sanction is based on the danger of the action and the proximity to limbs.

PK or YC - Croc roll with a drop near or onto lower limb – Low/Medium danger

RC - Croc roll with a drop onto a lower limb or causing hyperextension of leg – High danger

HEAD CONTACT PROCESS

FOUL PLAY

SANCTION FRAMEWORK

RC

YC

PK

HEAD/NECK CONTACT

**DIRECT
HIGH FORCE**

**INDIRECT
HIGH FORCE
DIRECT
LOW FORCE**

**INDIRECT
LOW FORCE**

IS THERE MITIGATION?

- Sudden/significant drop in height or change in direction from ball carrier
- A late change in dynamics due to another player in the contact
- An effort to wrap / bind and having no time to adjust
- Passive tackler: Feet planted, zero forward movement, falls backwards

FACTORS AGAINST MITIGATION

- Mitigation will not apply for intentional or highly reckless acts of foul play
- Open space and time to make a decision

Please be aware the ruck will be officiated under the Head Contact Process and not the Tackle Height Trial.

2.SPEED

1.TACKLER

Tackle Height

No impact on ball delivery - roll east/west immediately

2.TACKLE ASSIST

Clear Release

Supporting Body Weight - hands on ground allowing winning the ball or slowing the delivery should be penalised.

3.TACKLED PLAYER

‘Extra roll’ and ‘squeeze ball’ to delay the release of the ball when under pressure.

The ball must be available immediately for play.

4.JACKLER

Must support bodyweight

Go straight onto the ball **CLEAR LIFT. POSITIVE ACTION.**

Player who shows clear lift and doesn't win the ball should be rewarded.

Where possible proactive management and advantage should be played to create continuity. If this is not possible.

SANCTION - PK

“Use it!” at ruck - When the ball has been clearly won by a team at the ruck, and the ball is available to be played immediately by the scrum-half or another player. The team has 5 seconds to play the ball.

SANCTION- SCRUM

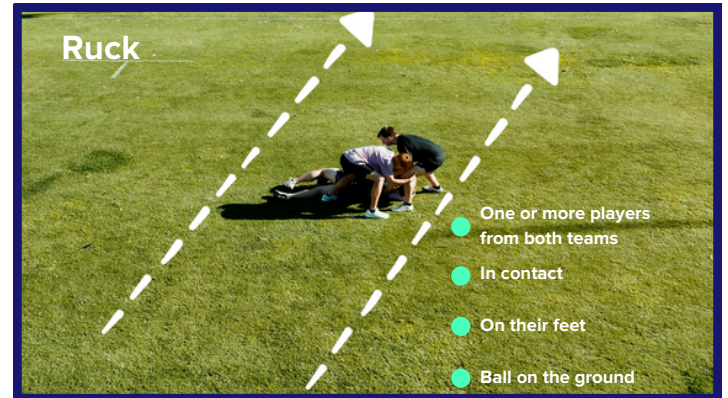
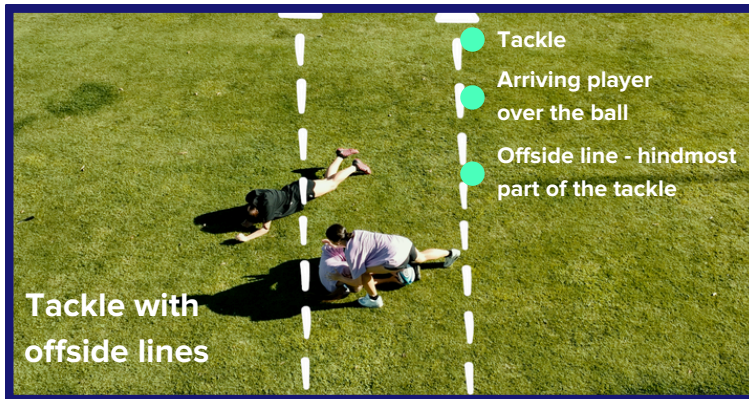


3.SPACE

BREAKDOWN/MAUL

Players clearly onside.

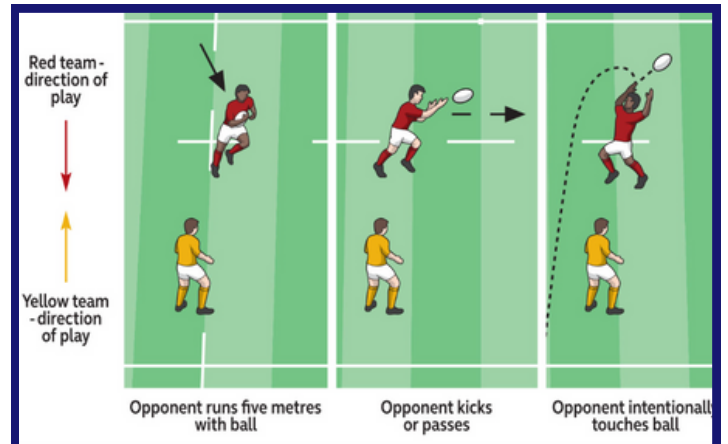
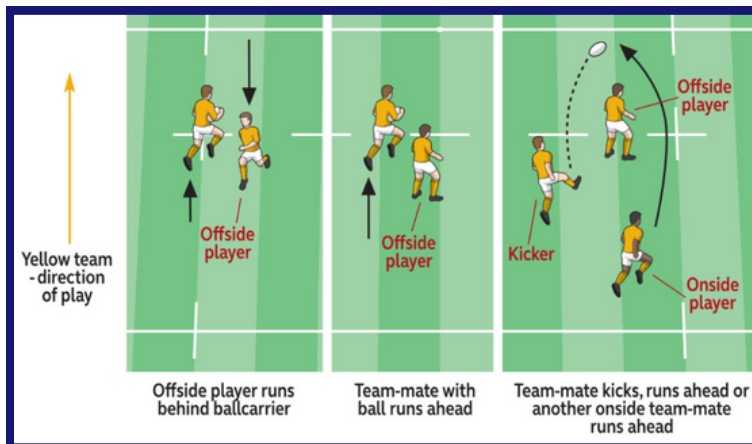
Players should be encouraged to provide space between hindmost part of the breakdown/maul and their defensive line.



KICKS

Law 10.4 An offside player may be penalised, if that player:

- Does not make an effort to retreat and interferes with play; or
- Moves forwards towards the ball



MAINTAINING SPACE WITHIN THE GAME IS INTEGRAL TO CONTINUITY OF PLAY.

PLAYERS - SPACE ALLOWS TIME AND OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS.

MATCH OFFICIALS - SPACE CREATES TIME BETWEEN EACH CONTEST WHICH PROVIDES GREATER OPPORTUNITY FOR CLEARER DECISION MAKING.

4.SET PIECE

SCRUM

CROUCH

Stability
Square
Height
Break foot

BIND

Balance-FK
Space on bind-FK
Break foot-FK
Stability-FK

SET

Hit and hold-FK
Feed to hook-FK
No delay feed-FK

POST FEED CONTEST

Push straight - to be rewarded, a team needs to push straight and through the mark. **note - a team going backwards while staying square should not be penalised.**

Tight Head - bind on the body, not on the arm. Loose Head - elbow pointing to the sideline. **note - these are not penalisable offences if the scrum is stable but will be considered if the scrum collapses.**

Defensive Scrum Half - Is not permitted past the mid-line of the scrum. Defend at the mid-line (within 1m), at the hindmost foot (#8), or 5m back (with the backline).

FK - NO SCRUM OPTION ALLOWED. PLAYERS NEED TO TAP OR KICK

LINEOUT AND MAUL

SET UP

Hooker on the mark
Gap - 1m
Receiver and non-throwing
hooker (2x2m)
No Walk-ins (clear stop)
SANCTION -FK

CONTEST

Contested throw = inside
shoulder
Non-contested throw = above
head
SANCTION- OPTION
No throwing player across -PK
No playing a player in the air-PK

MAUL

DEFENSE
No Early Drive -PK
No sacking lifter-PK
Side Entry/Collapse-PK
ATTACK
Lifters Obstructing-PK
Ripper in contact with jumper - no
slide back-PK

Where a defensive infringement has occurred, proactive management and advantage should be played to create continuity. If this is not possible, sanction appropriately.

An attacking infringement should be penalised immediately to avoid confusion.

FK - NO SCRUM OPTION ALLOWED. PLAYERS NEED TO TAP OR KICK

TOUCH LAW



5.INTERACTIONS

PRE MATCH

We encourage dialogue between coaches, captain and referees prior to the match. Reasons for this;

- Front Row Chat
- Captain and Referee to establish working relationship.
- Provide clarity in Law
- Provide understanding of how the team may want to play and allow the referee the opportunity to facilitate this within the Laws.

Proactive and meaningful discussion will see greater clarity and better working relationships between all participants.

DURING MATCH

2024 will see a firmer onfield stance to;

- back chat,
- protesting decisions and
- non sportsperson like conduct amongst players.

Referees will be encouraged to manage each scenario with context but have the following management tools at their disposal depending on severity.

- warning - quiet word with player or captain
- PK
- PK & YC - repeat behaviour or severity
- RC - abuse, discrimination etc.

POST MATCH

Referees are not to be approached immediately after the match for comment on the game. Please allow at least 15 minutes before any discussion takes place.

2024 will see Premier Rugby Competitions have the ability to provide post match feedback via a formal link provided by the competition.

The feedback will be aligned to the 5 Key Areas outlined in this document.

The purpose;

- feedback opportunity
- development opportunity
- build better relationships between coaches, players and referees.

If positive, this will be rolled out to other grades.

3 STRIKES POLICY

The Three Strike Policy in Community Rugby is designed to promote a positive and respectful environment within the sport. Its primary goal is to eliminate poor or abusive behaviour, especially targeting match officials, players, coaches, and spectators, that undermines the spirit of the game. The policy holds clubs accountable for the conduct of their members and supporters both on and off the field.

The determination of if/when to apply the Three Strike Policy is at the absolute discretion of the Member Union, or their delegate, and is summarised as follows:

Strike 1:

- The offending club receives a Show Cause Notice outlining the allegations.
- The club has 14 days to respond and demonstrate measures that will be taken to address the issue.
- If the response is inadequate, the Member Union may issue a strike.
- In addition to the strike, the specific team(s) involved may face a points deduction penalty.
- The club remains on Strike 1 for 12 months, unless Strike 2 is issued within that period.

Strike 2:

- This is a similar process to Strike 1 but with more severe penalties, including fines (up to \$5,000) and additional point deductions for each competitive team at the club.
- The club may face further oversight and requirements as part of the process.
- The club remains on Strike 2 for 12 months, unless Strike 3 is issued within that period.

Strike 3:

- This is a similar process to Strike 2 but with even more severe penalties, including possible termination of affiliation with the Member Union/Association/Rugby Australia.
- The club/teams may face removal from competitions, fines (up to \$10,000), and other penalties.
- The club remains on Strike 3 for 12 months, unless further instances of poor or abusive behaviour require to be addressed.

MEMBER UNION CONTACTS



Brumbies Rugby
Sam Norton-Knight
Coach Development Manager
P: 0459 349 796
E: s.nortonknight@brumbies.com.au



NSW Rugby
Owain Roberts
Coach Development and Education Manager
P: (02) 9323 3300
E: owain.roberts@nsw.rugby

NSW Rugby
Alex Richards
Referee Manager
P: (02) 9323 3300
E: alex.richards@nsw.rugby



Reds Rugby
Kris Burton
Regional Rugby Manager - Coach Development
P: 1300 753 733
E: kris.burton@redsrugby.com.au



RUGBY
UNION SA

Rugby Union South Australia
Rob Sadler
Coach Education Manager
P: 0469 028 850
E: Rob.Sadler@sa.rugby



TAS Rugby Union
Chris Noble
Director of Coaching
E: Chris.Noble@tasrugby.com.au

RUGBY
VIC

Rugby Victoria
Greg Fergus
Coach Education Manager
P: (03) 9221 0735
E: greg.fergus@rugbyvic.com.au



NT Rugby Union
Paul Healy
Manager Pathways & Participation
P: (08) 8945 1444
E: pathways@ntrugby.com.au



RUGBYWA

Rugby WA
Grant Lazarus
Education Coordinator
P: 0483 877 500
E: grant.lazarus@rugbywa.com.au

RUGBYAU CONTACTS

RUGBY
AU

Rugby Australia
Michael Magriplis
Head of Community Coaching
E: Michael.Magriplis@rugby.com.au

RUGBY
AU

Rugby Australia
Graham Cooper
Head of Community Match Officials
E: graham.cooper@rugby.com.au

GMG WORKING PARTY

Graham Cooper - Head of Community Match Officials
Michael Magriplis - Head of Community Coaching
Andrew Gilchrist - Match Official Manager, Workforce
Drew Crozier - Match Official Manager, Southern States
Brendan McKibbin, Match Official Performance Manager
Pete Garden - Competitions Manager
Tom Halliday - Head of Game Development